

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE****Rural Utilities Service**

[Docket No. RUS-22-TELECOM-0046]

**60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Broadband Grant Program; OMB Control No.: 0572–0127**

**AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) invites comments on this information collection for which approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will be requested.

**DATES:** Comments on this notice must be received by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] to be assured of consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be submitted electronically by the Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and, in the “Search Field” box, labeled “Search for Rules, Proposed Rules, Notices or Supporting Documents,” enter the following docket number: (RUS-22-TELECOM-0046). To submit or view public comments, click the “Search” button, select the “Documents” tab, then select the following document title: (60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Broadband Grant Program; OMB Control No.: 0572–0127) from the “Search Results” and select the “Comment” button. Before inputting your comments, you may also review the “Commenter’s Checklist” (optional). Insert your comments under the “Comment” title, click “Browse” to attach files (if available). Input your email address and select “Submit Comment.”

Information on using Regulations.gov, including instructions for accessing documents, submitting comments, and viewing the docket after the close of the comment period, is available through the site's "FAQ" link.

Other Information: Additional information about Rural Development and its programs is available on the Internet at <https://www.rd.usda.gov>.

All comments will be available for public inspection online at the Federal eRulemaking Portal (<https://www.regulations.gov>).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kimble Brown, Rural Development Innovation Center—Regulations Management Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250, Telephone: 202–720-6780, E-mail: Kimble.Brown@usda.gov

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) regulation (5 CFR part 1320) implementing provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104–13) requires that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities (see 5 CFR 1320.8(d)). This notice identifies an information collection that the Agency is submitting to OMB for extension.

**Title:** Broadband Grant Program.

**OMB Control Number:** 0572–0127.

**Type of Request:** Extension of a currently approved information collection.

**Abstract:** The provision of broadband transmission service is vital to the economic development, education, health, and safety of rural Americans.

To further this objective, RUS provides financial assistance in the form of grants to eligible entities that propose, on a "community-oriented connectivity" basis, to

provide broadband transmission service that fosters economic growth and delivers enhanced educational, health care, and public safety services to extremely rural, lower income communities. The Agency gives priority to rural areas that it believes have the greatest need for broadband transmission services. Grant authority is utilized to deploy broadband infrastructure to extremely rural, lower income communities on a “community- oriented connectivity” basis. The “community- oriented connectivity” concept integrates the deployment of broadband infrastructure with the practical, everyday uses and applications of the facilities. This broadband access is intended to promote economic development and provide enhanced educational and health care opportunities. The Agency provides financial assistance to eligible entities that are proposing to deploy broadband transmission service in rural communities where such service does not currently exist and who will connect the critical community facilities including the local schools, libraries, hospitals, police, fire and rescue services and who will operate a community center that provides free and open access to residents. The reporting burden covered by this collection of information consists of forms, documents and written burden to support an application request for grant funding.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 126.5 hours per response.

*Respondents:* Public bodies, commercial companies, cooperatives, nonprofits, Indian tribes, and limited dividend or mutual associations and must be incorporated or a limited liability company.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 73.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:* 1

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 12,286.

*Comments are invited on:*

(a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(b) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Kimble Brown, Rural Development Innovation Center – Regulations Management Division, at (202) 720-6780. E-mail: [Kimble.Brown@usda.gov](mailto:Kimble.Brown@usda.gov).

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

**Christopher A. McLean,**

*Acting Administrator,*

*Rural Utilities Service.*